

## ABSTRACT

The present invention comprises a system and method for insuring that a notebook computer and a docking station are compatible. This determination is made by each of the notebook and docking station communicating via a serial communication pathway. Each of these devices reads a product code and a ROM date associated with the other device, and then independently determine whether the other device may be safely communicated with or "docked." The systems and methods also take into account that two devices may be docked, but that only minimum functionality can exist between them based on differences in software revisions. In this case, the systems and methods allow the two devices to dock, but the computer system user is notified of the differences in software revisions.